

*a New Ser. by Rev. Silas McKee, 11/11/60*

The Attractions of Heaven overcoming those of Earth.

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A S E R M O N ,

DELIVERED IN

BRADFORD, VT.,

February 5, 1860;

ON THE SABBATH AFTER THE FUNERAL OF

MRS. NANCY B. FARNUM,

WIFE OF

MR. ROSWELL FARNUM,

Who died Jan'y 31, 1860, in the 66th year of her age;

BY REV. SILAS McKEEN,

PASTOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN BRADFORD.

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WINDSOR :

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1 8 6 0 .

BRADFORD, VT., Feb. 6th, 1860.

REV. SILAS McKEEN, *Dear Sir :*

I unite with other members of our family in respectfully requesting a copy of the Sermon preached by you, on the occasion of our beloved mother's death, for publication. It will be a gratification to us all to be able thus to preserve one of the few sad mementos of her who is gone, we trust, to a better world. Hoping that you will comply with our request, I remain

Respectfully yours,

ROSWELL FARNHAM, JR.

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R E P L Y .

ROSWELL FARNHAM, JR., ESQ.,

*Dear Sir :*

I willingly submit to your disposal a copy of the Sermon which was occasioned by the death of your excellent mother; hoping it will be a matter of satisfaction to the remaining members of her household, and numerous other friends.

Yours, truly,

SILAS McKEEN.

BRADFORD, Feb. 13th, 1860.

# A FUNERAL SERMON.

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JOB, 7 ; 16.

— I WOULD NOT LIVE ALWAY. —

This eminently patient man, Job, may not have been entirely free from all impatience, when he uttered this declaration ; for his troubles were exceedingly great, and hard to be endured. Still there is nothing in his affirmation inconsistent with entire submission to the divine will, and the exercise of the most exalted and fervent piety. That venerable man Simeon, with the infant Saviour in his arms, said, “ Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word ; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.” Paul, filled with enrapturing views of Heaven, expressed a strong desire to depart and be with Christ ; though willing to remain, while there was any thing further for him to do, or suffer for the promotion of his Saviour’s cause. Great multitudes of believers in the exercise of strong faith have rejoiced in view of the termination of their earthly course, and the prospect of being soon admitted to the enjoyment of that rest which remaineth to the people of God. Living as we do in a dying world ; called, as we often are to follow the remains of beloved relatives and friends to the grave, and knowing that our own time of sojourning here must soon be ended ; well would it be for us all, were we so impressed with the vanity of earthly things, and so in love with things heavenly and divine, that we should not wish to remain here a moment longer than infinite wisdom has determined. In this state of mind I wish ever to be found ; and to strengthen myself and every individual of this large audience in it, will be the main object of this funeral discourse.

Our departed friend, though called somewhat suddenly, was willing to go ; for she had for years been living a life of faith in the Son of God ; with Heaven continually in view ; and had nothing further

to do, but to resign her departing spirit unto His faithful hands, in full hope of a glorious immortality. May we be found also ready, at whatever moment we may be summoned hence.

Why should we wish to live alway? This life is replete with trials. We commence it, frail and feeble, destitute and helpless; and must immediately perish, if not nourished and protected by others. As our minds expand and our bodies strengthen, the one is often occupied by distressing anxieties and cares, and the other exercised with wearisome toil, fatigue, disease and pain. As we advance in years we advance in guilt, and are filled, at times, with painful apprehensions in regard to our future state. The arrows of death from our infancy have been flying around us; and many a victim has fallen on every side. Having attained to the meridian of life, we look for the mates of our childhood, the companions of our youth, our early partners in business; and they are gone. We would avail ourselves as in bygone days of parental counsel and sympathy; but our fathers and mothers, where are they? Overtaken by the infirmities of age we would lean on our children for support; but they have been visited with mortal disease, and have gone to the grave. We turn to our kind-hearted and faithful consorts, but find them stricken down by our side; the hearts which so long beat in unison with our own are still; and the eyes which once beamed on us with gladness, and were again bedewed with tears of sympathy, are closed in death. Death reigns with absolute and universal dominion, and none can flee from his presence, or prevent the execution of the sentence with which he is charged. Man is born unto trouble from which there is no escaping.

And, as if the evils which are inseparable from human nature, were not sufficient, how do men increase them! The heart full of malevolence, the tongue of slander, the hand of fraud and oppression, the sword of the warrior, the intoxicating and fatal cup of the drunkard-maker, the innumerable host of evil appetites, passions and practices which pervade the great family of man, vastly augment the troubles of life, and overwhelm the earth with a deluge of sin and suffering.

If there were no future state of happiness, if this life were to terminate in the deep and black gulf of annihilation, of what advantage would be our existence? Placing our joys in one scale, and



our sorrows in the other, of a true balance, it is doubtful which would preponderate. But since there is a future state of complete and eternal happiness for the righteous, surely those who are prepared to enjoy it, and who at death will enter into it, must find it gain to die. Death, instead of doing them any essential injury, will introduce them at once to the society of saints and angels; there to be forever holy and happy. The state of departed believers in Christ is incomparably more happy and desirable than that of even the best and happiest of His followers on earth. Those who have been renewed in heart, and truly converted to God, would not live here alway, for such reasons as these.

While they remain here some degree of criminal imperfection will cleave to them.

We are by nature entirely destitute of holiness; and of course unfit for that kingdom which no unclean thing can ever enter. In this state we remain, till renewed by the mighty operation of the Holy Spirit. In regeneration there is a principle of holiness implanted in the soul, which flows forth in love to God, and obedience to His revealed will; in repentance for sin, acts of kindness to our fellow men, and faith in Christ as the Lord our righteousness. To those who believe, He is precious; in Him they trust for pardon, sanctification and life everlasting. Still, we are imperfect; are sanctified but in part, and various propensities to evil incline us to deviate from the path of rectitude; or cause us to fail in the performance of our duty. Sanctification is a gradual work of the Spirit; and will never be completed till we arrive at the end of our course, and are on the point of passing away to Heaven. While we live we must maintain strenuously, the good fight of faith, with foes within and foes without. The divine oracles affirm, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we justify ourselves, our own mouth shall condemn us; if we say we are perfect, even that shall prove us perverse." Again, "Who can say I have made my heart clean from my sin?—We are all as an unclean thing; and our righteousness is as filthy rags. There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not." The devoted Christian knows, by sad experience, that these declarations of Scripture, so far as he is concerned, are strictly true. Like Paul, he finds a law in his members warring against the law of his mind; and so severe, at times, is the struggle, that he groans

out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And in the fervent supplication of David, he heartily unites, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Every day he has fresh occasions for repentance, confession, and humble supplication for the Divine forgiveness, support and guidance. His life is one of hard conflict with the wayward propensities of his own nature, the temptations of the world, and the assaults of the wicked one.

Why then should the Christian wish to remain here always? Can he wish to be always polluted with sin, that abominable thing which God abhors? Can he feel willing to be always offending a God of infinite excellency, unto whom he is under the deepest obligations of gratitude and love? Surely such an one may say with Job, "I would not live alway."

The Christian would not live alway, because at death he hopes to be rendered perfect in holiness. The real Christian desires nothing for himself more ardently than to be perfectly reconciled to God; to be filled with His spirit and prepared for His heavenly kingdom. He desires to gain a complete victory over the sinful propensities of his own nature; over all temptations by which he is assailed; and to be so established in holiness that he will never sin any more. To this he never fully attains during this state of trial and conflict, but hopes, hereafter, to be entirely holy and happy. This hope is warranted by the divine oracles. They teach that the work of sanctification which the Holy Spirit commences during life in any heart, will at death be perfected. The measure of the Spirit which is now given to those who have been created anew in righteousness and true holiness, is an earnest or pledge of entire sanctification. They are sealed with the Holy Spirit of God unto the day of complete redemption. Immediately after death they will be with Christ in paradise; and, as without holiness no man shall see the Lord; as into the kingdom of heaven no unclean thing can ever enter; it is manifest that at death all the heirs of salvation will be perfectly transformed into the divine likeness. Then the work of preparing for Heaven, which had been, perhaps for years but slowly progressing, will be finished; and every soul which has been hungering and thirsting for righteousness will be perfectly satisfied. "I shall be satisfied," said the Psalmist, "— when I awake in thy likeness."



Is not this a sufficient reason why those who are seeking for higher attainments in the divine life, who desire to be conformed to God, should contemplate with satisfaction the termination of their earthly course? Christian, do you not desire, in God's good time, to enter into a state, free from all temptations to evil, a state of perfect reconciliation to God, a state in which you will no more sin, no more be polluted with iniquity, where sensual affections will no more mingle with your holy aspirations, and no unsanctified appetites and passions mar the sweetness of the most intimate communion with your Saviour? Do you not desire to be placed entirely beyond the reach of Satan's power, and all the allurements of a seducing world? Do you not wish to be bound so fast by the cords of love that it will be impossible for you ever to depart from God? to be deprived of all liberty except the glorious liberty of doing His will, and rejoicing with His saints in the light of His countenance forever? If so, you may adopt the language of Job; for such a state of purity and perfection cannot be found this side of Heaven.

Another reason which may make believers willing to depart is, that they will enjoy better society after death, than is to be found on earth. In this life we are blessed with the love, sympathy and kindness of excellent friends; we have the privilege of uniting with our fellow travelers to the heavenly city, in acts of worship both elevating and delightful. Still, we find none who yield a perfect obedience to the divine law, who are filled with the spirit of Christ, and follow perfectly his divine example. Many of the professed followers of the Saviour give but little or no evidence of piety; and even the best have many imperfections. We all have daily occasion for the exercise of forbearance and forgiveness, and of that charity which suffereth long, and still is kind, even in our own family circles, and the church of God.

But, at death, the truly pious are introduced, at once into the society of angels, and of the spirits of the just made perfect, who are as holy, as benevolent, as worthy of love and confidence as infinite goodness requires them to be. Every thing there is suited to please and gratify a heavenly mind. Love, friendship and perfect harmony, will there forever reign. All will be happy in the society of their fellow saints, and rejoice in God with joy unspeakable and full of glory. There will be no cold hearts in Heaven;

no variance or disaffection; no weariness in well-doing; but ten thousand times ten thousand saints and angels will there unite with heart and voice, in ascribing, "Blessing and honor and glory and power unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever." There, all the excellent of the earth who have ever lived and passed away now live and rejoice; and among them some who were our nearest and dearest relatives and friends while they sojourned here below.

If you are, by divine grace, in any measure prepared for such society as this, would you not be willing to pass, even through the valley and shadow of death, to enjoy it? O, how animating the thought, that scenes of such surpassing delight await the people of God, now ready to sink and die under the manifold trials of this life.

The believer may reasonably desire not to live here alway, because by means of death the final condition of his body, as well as that of his soul, will be rendered infinitely more desirable. While he remains here his body must be liable to manifold infirmities, diseases and calamities; to weariness and suffering, prostration and death. But the Scriptures assure us that there shall be a resurrection of the dead. That though the bodies of the righteous must die and return to dust, the Lord and Judge of all will raise them up again in the last day, wonderfully and gloriously improved. Job seems to have been established in this belief. Though he was aware that he must go down to the grave, yet he expected in due time to be called forth. "Thou shalt call," he said, "and I will answer thee; for thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hands." "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." "They that have done good," the Saviour himself assures us, "shall come forth unto the resurrection of life." They will rise to glory and honor. There bodies, which sin and death have made vile, will be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body to shine in the beauties of a glorious immortality in the presence of God forever.

The dying believer does not resign his body to the grave in despair; but looks forward to the glorious morning of the resurrection, and sees the prison of the grave opened, the bands of death unloosed, the particles which once composed the body, and which

no one but the Omniscient could find, collected and formed into the same body once more, now fashioned like to Christ's glorious body. Though the scriptures do not gratify curiosity in regard to the qualities and appearance of the bodies which shall be raised, they with sufficient plainness teach that they will be incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and immortal ; free from every infirmity, and adapted to the most exalted service and enjoyment of God. "This corruptible shall put on incorruption ; this mortal shall put on immortality and death shall be swallowed up in victory." This glorious prospect cheers the suffering and dying believer, and enables him to say in holy triumph, " O, death ! where is thy sting ? O, grave ! where is thy victory ? Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, though Jesus Christ our Lord."

Believers may, also, reasonably wish to depart, because they will in heaven behold their adorable Saviour, and enjoy the most intimate communion with Him forever. While sojourning here they love to meditate on His glorious character and wonderful works, to think of His coming down from heaven to seek and save the lost ; to contemplate His lowly birth, in connection with its being proclaimed and celebrated by a multitude of the heavenly hosts ; to listen to His wonderful discourses ; and to the report of the stupendous miracles which He performed ; they are deeply affected in view of the sufferings which He endured ; His agony in the garden ; and his death on the cross when the sun at noonday was shrouded in darkness, and the earth trembled with consternation ; they rejoice in view of his resurrection from the dead ; his triumphant return to his throne in glory ; and bless him for all he has done and suffered, for all which he is now doing, to save them ; to save from sin and woe, all who will come to him, and to raise them to a state of holiness, glory and happiness, altogether surpassing the utmost grasp of human comprehension. Believers love to approach the sacramental table, and there commemorate their Saviour's atoning sacrifice ; and consecrate themselves anew to his service.

Still, while on earth we see only as through a glass, darkly ; we catch but some glimpses of our Redeemer's glory ; whereas in Heaven we shall see Him as He is, and dwell in the light of His countenance. The Saviour's intercession, doubtless still is, as it was, " Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me, where I am ; that they may behold my glory which thou

hast given me—that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.” When thus received into His divine presence it must seem to them marvellous that a being so infinitely exalted should have submitted to such degradation and suffering to redeem them from the thralldom of sin, and save them from the wrath to come. As they contemplate His glory, and reflect that their joys were procured by His sorrows; their glories by His reproach; their life by His death; their crowns by His cross; their elevation to thrones by His degradation to the manger and finally to the tomb; their emotions of wonder, gratitude and joy, will be unutterably delightful. Their happiness will be as great as their ever-increasing capacities, and as enduring as eternity. Into this blessedness the saints immediately enter on passing away from the trials and sorrows of this present life.

Who then that has been made a partaker of the divine nature, and has a good hope through grace, would choose to remain forever in such a world as this. Why should any, who are united to Christ by a living faith, fear death? Why not, rather, since he comes to unloose our fetters and set us free, welcome his approach? Why not rejoice to know that Christ has prayed that all who believe in Him may be with Him in glory; and that He will in the best time and manner, remove them from the sins and sorrows of this life, to the full enjoyment of all that is desirable in Heaven? Death, it is true, dissolves all mere earthly connections, and separates us from all things seen and temporal; but introduces departing believers to connections still more desirable, and to the possession of things divine, soul-satisfying, and eternal. For such to die is gain—immense and eternal gain. Then let us be reconciled to our destiny, and with entire composure await the hour of our dissolution, ever rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. Death can do those who are prepared to meet their God no real injury; but even when His cold grasp is felt, love divine and a hope full of immortality will warm and cheer their hearts. The struggle will be short, the conquest of the believer complete, and the joys of the triumph inexpressible and eternal.

To prevent misunderstanding, it is freely admitted that, for wise purposes God has deeply implanted in human nature a love of life and dread of death; which by their joint action strongly tend to make all men, Christians no less than others, willing to remain here



all the days of their appointed time. Due submission to the divine will demands of us this willingness. The good and faithful son, while pleased with the prospect of acting in due season as a free man, is not anxious to exceed his minority. The master and crew of a ship though looking forward with desire to their destined haven, must not be so weary of their voyage as to neglect the means of bringing it to a prosperous termination. The soldier, inured to the hardships and perils of warfare, may desire a cessation of hostilities, and long for the quietude and comforts of home, but must at the same time choose to persevere in the faithful performance of his duty. So while the Christian would not live alway, he is willing to live and labor and suffer, as long as God sees best. When his time comes, if in the exercise of a right spirit, he is willing and happy to go. Paul was in a strait, having a desire to depart and be with Christ; and at the same time being convinced that it might be better for his brethren, and for the cause of religion on earth, for him to remain longer. When the set time for his departure came he rejoiced to leave this world for the heavenly. In this he has left an admirable example for the imitation of us all. To be willing to remain in the faithful performance of our duty as long as God pleases, and to rejoice to go, when called, to serve him in a higher and happier sphere, is the state of mind and heart to which we should all aspire. And if you have read with care the account given in the holy scriptures of the experience and sayings of the dying saints; or the obituaries of pious believers in subsequent ages; you must have been impressed with the fact, that they have generally been, not only sweetly reconciled to the will of God their Saviour, but in the near prospect of death have felt willing and happy to depart and be with him in glory. It may encourage and strengthen us to listen to the voices of a few of these departing believers who spoke not merely for themselves, but as the representatives of a great multitude which no man can number. I will call for their testimony.

Jacob, the patriarch. "Behold I die, but God shall be with you." And when he had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet unto the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.

Job. "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

King David. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow

of death I will fear no evil ; for thou art with me.—Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life ; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

The venerable Simeon. “ Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.”

Stephen the first Christian martyr. “ Lord Jesus receive my spirit,—Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.”

The Apostle Paul. “ I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith ; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day ; and not to me only, but unto all them, also, that love his appearing.”

Polycarp, for more than eighty years pastor of the church in Smyrna, who expired at the stake for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. “ I am a Christian, I bless thee, O Lord that thou hast thought me worthy to have part in the number of thy martyrs—in the cup of thy Christ. For this, and for all things, I praise thee, I bless thee, I glorify thee.

St. Augustine. “ O how I long for that blessed moment when this poor unworthy creature, the last and least of all my Master’s servants, shall be called to put off this load of sin and corruption, and to mingle with that harmonious host above, doing homage with them in the blessed presence of my glorious Lord.”

Luther, the great reformer. “ O my heavenly Father thou hast revealed to me thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, I have preached Him, I have confessed Him, I love Him, and worship Him as my dearest Saviour and Redeemer. Into thy hands, I commit my spirit ; God of truth, thou hast redeemed me.”

David Brainerd. “ I long to be in Heaven praising and glorifying God with the holy angels.—It is sweet to me to think of eternity ; I am almost there, I long to be there.

Dr. Doddridge. “ I see indeed no prospect of recovery ; yet my heart rejoiceth in God my Saviour. Such transporting views of the heavenly world is my heavenly Father now indulging me with, as no words can express.”

Isabella Graham. “ I have no more doubt of going to my Saviour than if I were already in his arms, my guilt is all transferred ; He has cancelled all I owed.”



Sarah Lanman Smith. "There is nothing at all melanchally in the death of a Christian. I feel very happy in the prospect of death."

Thomas Scott, the excellent commentator. "This is Heaven begun below. I have done with darkness forever. Nothing remains but light and joy, forever."

Edward Payson. "The celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me, its odors are wafted to me, its sounds strike my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart. A single heart and a single tongue seem altogether inadequate to my wants. I want a whole heart for every separate emotion, and a whole tongue to express that emotion."

These are a few specimens of the joyful utterances of dying believers; which might be accumulated to an indefinite extent. The same testimony, the same animating hopes, have we heard from the lips of many of our own dearly beloved Christian friends and relations as they were passing away. O, how did it sound with the melody of Heaven in our ears, and console our agonized and failing hearts. Memory places *me* again by the dying bed of the dearly beloved wife of my youth, called away in life's morning; I see her countenance beaming with celestial loveliness; and hear her whispering —

"O glorious hour! O blest abode!  
I shall be near and like my God!  
And flesh and sin no more control  
The sacred pleasures of the soul."

I hear also a beloved daughter, in view of her departure, in her own sweet words thus expressing the emotions of her sanctified spirit: —

"I am going — going Home!  
Father, when thy call I hear,  
Let me neither shrink or fear;  
Gladly would I come to Thee,  
Painful though the way may be;  
All thy children gath'ring fast,  
Shall encircle Thee at last —  
All at Home! Yes all at Home!  
Never, never, thence to roam."

Thanks be to God for the rich consolations which he has imparted to so many of our dear ones, and to such an innumerable multitude of believers, when passing away to their glorious home in the heavens. All dying believers have not the same strength of faith, the same clear views and joyful anticipations; some may pass directly from darkness into light; but as a general fact all have *peace*, peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. "Mark the

perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." Surely the people of God would not live here always. When they hear the voice of their blessed Saviour calling them away to dwell forever with Him and His servants in glory, they can say, as did Lady Huntington, "All is well forever—I long to be at home."

O, it should be to us a matter of great and holy satisfaction that when our pious friends pass away to their final rest, the great object of their lives is secured. They have never, as Christians, desired to live here always. They have borne in mind that they have had here, no permanent dwelling place; they have felt that they were pilgrims seeking another and better country, even an heavenly; and it has been their desire and effort to be prepared for immortal blessedness; and as they have one after another been called away, the desire of their hearts has been realized. They have accomplished their perilous voyage and entered the port of everlasting peace. They have fought the good fight of faith and secured the victor's crown. They have aimed to know and do the will of their exalted Redeemer; have trusted in him for pardon and life, and through grace have been approved as good and faithful servants, and received into the joys of His kingdom. There they praise and bless Him for all His dealings with them here below, and for His covenant faithfulness in taking them, in His own time and way from the sorrows of earth to the joys of Heaven. While then, we cherish their memories with fondness, and feel our bereavements deeply, let us rejoice that they are now so unspeakably happy in the full enjoyment of their Saviour's love. O why should we be grieved that His prayer in regard to them has been answered; and that they are now with Him in glory? "Why should we," as St. Cyprian said, "put on *dark* robes of mourning, when they have already put on *white* robes of rejoicing; and weep for them as lost and extinct, while we profess to believe that they live with God?" Why do we not rather ourselves wish to depart, and be united with them forever in their exalted services and soul-satisfying enjoyments?

We confidently trust that the beloved friend whose remains we, three days since, committed to the grave in hope of the resurrection unto life, is now one of that happy number. A brief sketch of her course through life, with its peaceful termination, will not, I presume be deemed inappropriate here. NANCY BIXBY, for that

was her maiden name, was a daughter of Capt. David Bixby, late of Piermont, New Hampshire; where she was born May the first, 1794. Her early years were passed in the place of her nativity. On the twenty-ninth of April, 1822, she became the second wife of our friend ROSWELL FARNUM, whose lot it has been to survive her, and soon removed with him to Boston; taking with her the infant son of the first wife; whom she thenceforth regarded as her own. Following the fortunes of her husband, she passed with him quietly along through the various changes of life, till on the 30th day of January, 1860, she at the gate-way of death, in the sixty-sixth year of her age, was separated from him, and passed away to her final home.

Her parents, two brothers and a sister, had been called away before her. She has left the companion of her life, the son also to whom I have referred, now far away, and the son and daughter here present, to feel that they have indeed experienced a sore bereavement, and to follow her to that world from which none return. In the temporal and eternal welfare of all, she felt a deep interest; and all regarded her with heartfelt affection. Her only surviving brother, and her youngest sister had the mournful satisfaction of attending her funeral; but the residence of another sister is quite too far away in the West, to allow her to be here. May all the kindred of the deceased be prepared for eternal blessedness with her in Heaven.

Mrs. Farnum, when about thirty-four years of age, trusting that she had experienced the renovating power of the Holy Spirit, made a public profession of her hope, and united with the Congregational Church in Boston, then under the pastoral care of the learned Dr. Jenks, the venerable compiler of the Comprehensive Commentary. She subsequently removed her relation to a Congregational Church in Haverhill, Massachusetts; and on becoming a resident with us, she united with this church, in 1842; and remained a member during the remainder of her life. Though often detained from public worship by feeble health, it was her pleasure to be present when she could; especially on sacramental occasions, which she accounted peculiarly precious. She was a person of equable temper, mild, but decided; and justly esteemed a good wife, a good mother, a kind neighbor, and a sincere and humble follower of the blessed Saviour.

Shortly before she was arrested by her last sickness, she went to

see her failing friend and former neighbor, the worthy lady to whose funeral sermon we listened with so much interest the last Sabbath,\* little thinking, probably, that she was so very soon to meet her where sickness and death can never come. When laid on her own sick bed, neither she nor her friends, for some days, had any apprehension of a fatal termination of her disease. A most distressing and ominous change unexpectedly occurred; but she manifested no alarm. She knew in whom she believed, and that he was able, and would be faithful, to save her. When asked if she was afraid to die, she answered, with emphasis, "No; I trust in Jesus—I trust in Jesus." On being asked if she had any messages for absent friends, she left something appropriate to each; earnestly desiring the salvation of all. Thus did she quietly, in the exercise of a firm faith in the adorable Redeemer, finish her earthly course. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

In view of the fact that we cannot live here always, even if we would; that we are, indeed, liable at any moment to be removed from this to the eternal world; it is the part of true wisdom to keep this world beneath our feet, to set our affections strongly on things above; and so to live from day to day that when called, we may rejoice to go and be forever with the Lord—forever blessed and happy with the redeemed in glory. It is not enough to be willing to die; but we should be so on Christian principles. Persons may wish to die, because they are weary of the labors and hardships of this life; or, perhaps, have committed disgraceful crimes which they fear will come to light; or their prospects for this world are, for some cause or other, so dark and gloomy. In these circumstances some have so longed for death that they have by the perpetration of suicide rushed, uncalled, into the presence of their final Judge. Many worn out with sickness and suffering have been willing to die, while exhibiting no evidence of faith in Christ or preparation of heart for the kingdom of Heaven.

If you sympathize with the followers of Christ in their willingness to pass away into eternity when called, is it for the same reasons; because you are actuated by the same pious aspirations? Do you like them, groan under the burden of your sins, and desire to be

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\* Mrs. JOEL MORRIS, Sermon by Rev. H. C. CUSHING.



sanctified wholly? Do you love the society of God's people, and long to be united with the general assembly above in their exalted and joyful services? Is the Saviour in your estimation precious, and do you desire to be perfectly transformed into His glorious likeness? Are you willing to serve him faithfully while you remain below, and choose that He should order every thing regarding your departure according to his own infinite wisdom and goodness? If so, you are warranted to trust that your lives are hid with Christ in God; and that, at whatever time, and by whatever means you may be removed from this world, death to you will be gain; a happy exchange of a world of sin and sorrow, for one of glory and enjoyment everlasting. Go directly on, in the faithful performance of your duty; and, in God's good time, the strongest and purest desire of your hearts will be granted.

But those whose supreme affections are placed on the things of earth, who are pursuing its riches, honors or gratifications, as matters of the highest importance, who would, were it possible, live here always, are unconsciously preparing for astounding and overwhelming disappointment and anguish of spirit. "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death." "Let me die the death of the righteous, and my last end be like his." AMEN.



After the Sermon the following Hymn was impressively sung by a full choir.

I would not live alway: I ask not to stay  
Where storm after storm rises o'er the dark way;  
The few lurid mornings that dawn on us here,  
Are enough for life's woes, full enough for its cheer.

I would not live alway; no, welcome the tomb,  
Since Jesus has lain there, I dread not its gloom:  
There sweet be my rest, till he bid me arise,  
To hail him in triumph descending the skies.

I would not live alway, away from my God,  
Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode;  
Where the rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright plains,  
And the noon-tide of glory eternally reigns:

Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,  
Their Saviour and brethren transported to greet;  
While the anthems of rapture unceasingly roll,  
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul.







